

RFR - REQUIRED SPECIFICATIONS

In general, most of the required contractual stipulations are referenced in the Standard Contract Form and the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions (either version). However, the following RFR provisions must appear in all Commonwealth competitive procurements conducted under 801 CMR 21.00:

The terms of 801 CMR 21.00: Procurement of Commodities and Services (and 808 CMR 1.00: Compliance, Reporting and Auditing for Human and Social Services, if applicable) are incorporated by reference into this RFR. Words used in this RFR shall have the meanings defined in 801 CMR 21.00 (and 808 CMR 1.00, if applicable). Additional definitions may also be identified in this RFR. Unless otherwise specified in this RFR, all communications, responses, and documentation must be in English, all measurements must be provided in feet, inches, and pounds and all cost proposals or figures in U.S. currency. All responses must be submitted in accordance with the specific terms of this RFR. No electronic responses may be submitted in response to this RFR.

Bidder Communication. Bidders are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of the procuring department except as specified in this RFR, and no other individual Commonwealth employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any question or inquiry concerning this RFR. Bidders may contact the contact person for this RFR in the event this RFR is incomplete or the bidder is having trouble obtaining any required attachments electronically through Comm-PASS.

Reasonable Accommodation. Bidders with disabilities or hardships that seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of RFR information in an alternative format, must communicate such requests in writing to the contact person. Requests for accommodation will be addressed on a case by case basis. A bidder requesting accommodation must submit a written statement which describes the bidder's disability and the requested accommodation to the contact person for the RFR. The PMT reserves the right to reject unreasonable requests.

Public Records. All responses and information submitted in response to this RFR are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L., Chapter 66, Section 10, and to Chapter 4, Section 7, Subsection 26. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes shall be disregarded.

Best Value Selection and Negotiation. The PMT may select the response(s) which demonstrates the best value overall, including proposed alternatives, that will achieve the procurement goals of the department. The PMT and a selected bidder, or a contractor, may negotiate a change in any element of contract performance or cost identified in the original RFR or the selected bidder's or contractor's response which results in lower costs or a more cost effective or better value than was presented in the selected bidder's or contractor's original response.

Costs. Costs which are not specifically identified in the bidder's response, and accepted by a department as part of a contract, will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this RFR. The Commonwealth will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders responding to this RFR.

Comm-PASS. If this RFR has been distributed electronically using the Comm-PASS system, RFR attachments that are referenced are available either as separate .pdf files with this RFR or in the Comm-PASS Forms and Information section: www.comm-pass.com. Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining and completing the required attachments that are identified in this RFR and for checking Comm-PASS for any addenda or modifications that are subsequently made to this RFR or attachments. The Commonwealth and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodation to bidders who fail to check for amended RFRs and submit inadequate or incorrect responses. Bidders are advised to check the "last change" field on the summary page of RFRs for which they intend to submit a response to ensure that they have the most recent RFR files. Bidders may not alter (manually or electronically) the RFR language or any RFR component files. Modifications to the body of the RFR, specifications, terms and conditions, or which change the intent of this RFR are prohibited and may disqualify a response.

Northern Ireland Notice and Certification. All bidders must complete the Northern Ireland Notice and Certification form to satisfy M.G.L. c.7 section 22C, which states that no state agency may procure commodities or services from any bidder employing ten (10) or more employees in an office or other facility located in Northern Ireland unless the bidder certifies through the notice and certification form that if it employs ten or more employees in Northern Ireland, a) the bidder does not discriminate in employment, compensation or the terms, conditions and privileges of employment on account of religious or political belief, b) the bidder promotes religious tolerance within the workplace and the eradication of any manifestations of religious and other illegal discrimination and, c) the bidder is not engaged in the manufacture, distribution or sale of firearms, munitions, including rubber or plastic bullets, tear gas, armored vehicles or military aircraft for use or deployment in any activity in Northern Ireland.

Subcontracting Policies. Prior approval of the department is required for any subcontracted service of the contract. Contractors are responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of its subcontractors. Subcontractors are required to meet the same state and federal financial and program reporting requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as contractors.

Affirmative Market Program (AMP) (updated 11/20/02).

Massachusetts Executive Order 390 established a policy to promote the award of state contracts in a manner that develops and strengthens Minority and Women Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) and resulted in the Affirmative Market Program in Public Contracting. As a result, M/WBEs are strongly encouraged to submit responses to this RFR, either as prime vendors, subcontractors, joint venture partners or other type of business partnerships.

Non-certified bidders are strongly encouraged to develop creative initiatives to help foster new business relationships with M/WBEs within the primary industries affected by this RFR. In order to satisfy the compliance of this section and encourage bidder's participation of AMP objectives, the Affirmative Market Program Plan for large procurements greater than \$50,000 must be evaluated at 10% or more of the total evaluation. Once an AMP Plan is submitted, negotiated and approved, the agency will then monitor the contractor's performance, and use actual expenditures with SOMWBA certified contractors to fulfill their own AMP expenditure benchmarks. M/WBE participation must be incorporated into and monitored for all types of procurements regardless of size, however, submission of an AMP Plan is mandated only for large procurements over \$50,000.

Agencies may require some or all of the following components as part of the Affirmative Market Program Plan submitted by bidders: Sub-contracting with certified M/WBE firms, Growth and Development activities to increase M/WBE capacity, Ancillary use of certified M/WBE firms, Past Performance or information of past expenditures with certified M/WBEs. Agencies are encouraged to include additional incentives for bidders to commit to at least one certified MBE and WBE in the submission of AMP plans.

A Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Woman Business Enterprise (WBE), M/Non-Profit, or W/Non-Profit, is defined as such by SOMWBA. All certified businesses are required to submit an up to date copy of their State Office of Minority and Women Business Assistance (SOMWBA) certification letter. The purpose for this certification is to participate in the Commonwealth's Affirmative Market Program for public contracting. Minority- and Women-Owned firms that are not currently certified but would like to be considered as an M/WBE for the purpose of this RFR should submit their application at least two weeks prior to the RFR closing date. For further information on SOMWBA certification, contact their office at 1-617-727-8692 or via the Internet at mass.gov/somwba.

Affirmative Market Program Subcontracting Policies. (updated 11/20/02). Prior approval of the agency is required for any subcontracted service of the contract. Agencies may define required deliverables including, but not limited to, documentation necessary to verify subcontractor commitments and expenditures with Minority- or Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) for the purpose of monitoring and enforcing compliance of subcontracting commitments made in a bidder's Affirmative Market Program (AMP) Plan. Contractors are responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate

oversight of its subcontractors. Subcontractors are required to meet the same state and federal financial and program reporting requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as contractors.

Contract Expansion. If additional funds become available during the contract duration period, the department reserves the right to increase the maximum obligation to some or all contracts executed as a result of this RFR or to execute contracts with contractors not funded in the initial selection process, subject to available funding, satisfactory contract performance and service or commodity need.

Multi-State EMall™. *Required for statewide and OSD-designated statewide contracts only.* The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has implemented the Multi-State EMall according to the Open Buying on the Internet (OBI) model. The Commonwealth has adopted this method of Electronic Commerce and is in the process of selecting contracts for implementation. This new method of Electronic Commerce or others may become a requirement of this contract at a later date. At least 120 days notice will be given before an implementation requirement will be enforced. More information about OBI is available at: www.openbuy.org.

Information Technology - Clarification of Language in Section 11, Indemnification of the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions. *Required for the following object codes within the "Expenditure Classification Handbook" as issued by the Office of the Comptroller:*

E08 - Telecommunication Services, Voice
EE8 - Telecommunication Services, Data
E09 - Software purchases
H03 - IT consulting & Maintenance
J08 - IT Cabling/installation & maintenance
K01 - IT equipment purchases
L01 - IT TELP
L21 - IT Rental or Lease
L41 - IT Technical Support

Pursuant to Section 11, Indemnification of the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions, the term "other damages" shall include, but shall not be limited to, the reasonable costs the Commonwealth incurs to repair, return, replace or seek cover (purchase of comparable substitute commodities and services) under a contract. "Other damages" shall not include damages to the Commonwealth as a result of third party claims, provided, however, that the foregoing in no way limits the Commonwealth's right of recovery for personal injury or property damages or patent and copyright infringement under Section 11 nor the Commonwealth's ability to join the contractor as a third party defendant. Further, the term "other damages" shall not include, and in no event shall the Contractor be liable for damages for the Commonwealth's use of contractor provided products or services, loss of Commonwealth records, or data (or other intangible property), loss of use of equipment, lost revenue, lost savings or lost profits of the Commonwealth. In no event shall "other damages" exceed the greater of \$100,000, or two times the value of the product or service (as defined in the contract scope of work) that is the subject of the claim. Section 11 sets forth the contractor's entire liability under a contract. Nothing in this section shall limit the Commonwealth's ability to negotiate higher limitations of liability in a particular contract, provided that any such limitation must specifically reference Section 11 of the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions.

Filing Requirements + *Required for POS Only.* Successful bidders must have filed their Uniform Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report (UFR), as required for current contractors, with the Operational Services Division for the most recently completed fiscal year before a contract can be executed and services may begin. In the event immediate services are required by a department, a contract may be executed and services may begin with the approval of OSD and the appropriate secretariat. However, unless authorized by OSD and the appropriate secretariat, the contractor will not be paid for any such services rendered until the UFR has been filed.

Debriefing + *Required for POS Only. Optional specification for non-POS RFRs.* Non-successful bidders may request a debriefing from the department. Department debriefing procedures may be found in the RFR. Non-successful bidders aggrieved by the decision of a department must participate in a debriefing as a prerequisite to an administrative appeal.

Administrative Appeals to Departments + *Required for POS Only.* Non-successful bidders who participate in the debriefing process and remain aggrieved with the decision of the department may appeal that decision to the department head. Department appeal procedures may be found in the RFR.

Administrative Appeals to OSD + *Required for POS Only.* Non-successful bidders who participate in the department appeal process and remain aggrieved by the selection decision of the department may appeal the department decision to the Operational Services Division. The basis for an appeal to OSD is limited to the following grounds:

1. The competitive procurement conducted by the department failed to comply with applicable regulations and guidelines. These would be limited to the requirements of 801 CMR 21.00 or any successor regulations, the *Procurement Policies and Procedures Handbook*, subsequent policies and procedures issued by OSD and the specifications of the RFR; or
2. There was a fundamental unfairness in the procurement process. The allegation of unfairness or bias is one that is easier to allege than prove, consequently, the burden of proof rests with the bidder to provide sufficient and specific evidence in support of their claim. OSD will presume that departments conducted a fair procurement absent documentation to the contrary.

Requests for an appeal must be sent to the attention of the Deputy Purchasing Agent at Room 1017, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 and be received within fourteen (14) calendar days of the postmark of the notice of the department head's decision on appeal. Appeal requests must specify in sufficient detail the basis for the appeal. Sufficient detail requires a description of the published policy or procedure which was applied and forms the basis for the appeal and presentation of all information that supports the claim under paragraphs 1 or 2 above. OSD reserves the right to reject appeal requests based on grounds other than those stated above or those submitted without sufficient detail on the basis for the appeal.

The decision of the Deputy Purchasing Agent shall be rendered, in writing, setting forth the grounds for the decision within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the appeal request. Pending appeals to the Deputy Purchasing Agent shall not prohibit the department from proceeding with executing contracts.